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## A king of Kins



MARYANNE FORTI/  
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Longtime member of the Fortmill and District Kinsmen, Kevin Twomey, was honoured and given the Life Member distinction — the highest honour a club member can receive in the Kin Canada organization.

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Thank you to all my clients for another successful year.

# Happy New Year!



# UPFRONT

■ **MUSIC:** Port Colborne singer releases debut CD



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Port Colborne singer/songwriter Sarah Boulton is hosting a free concert at Riverstone Event Centre in Warram on Monday, Dec. 29 to celebrate the launch of her debut album, *Undefined*.

## Health scare prompts leap toward dream job

**MARYANNE FIRTH**  
QMI Agency Niagara

Sarah Boulton isn't ready for Plan B.

She knows her dreams are risky, but it's a chance the singer/songwriter feels she needs to take.

The Port Colborne native set out to become a teacher, beginning her first year of Brock University's concurrent education program in fall of 2013.

But the now 19-year-old had difficulty finding happiness in the classroom.

"I had always wanted to be a musician, but was encouraged to do Plan B first," she said from her lakeside city home.

Then a health scare in early 2014 helped Boulton realize that if she was ever going to pursue her passion, it had to

be now.

The singer was struck with a particularly bad bout of laryngitis that left her unable to perform for months.

"I couldn't speak for a week, and it was two months before I could even make a sound when I sang. Everything was so swollen," she said.

The inability to sing left Boulton feeling trapped.

"It was like something was stuck inside of me. I wanted to let it out, but I couldn't. It was horrible."

She underwent several intense sessions with a vocal specialist in hopes of getting her full range back.

"I was worried I'd never get back to my full potential," she said.

When he voice eventually returned, she promised herself she would set Plan B aside

and follow her heart.

"I just had to take the chance and try."

Boulton has released her debut album, *Undefined*.

"It's a huge accomplishment. I've always wanted to have that finished product," she said of the acoustic-style album, which is filled with personal reflections from the past year.

The CD is now in the hands of about 75 college radio stations across the country, a handful of which, including Brock, have added Boulton's songs to their on-air playlists.

*Undefined* can be purchased on iTunes or by contacting Boulton through her website at [www.sarahboulton.com](http://www.sarahboulton.com).

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■ **RECOGNITION:** Kevin Twomey named Lifetime Member

## Kinsman receives club's highest honour

**MARYANNE FIRTH**  
QMI Agency Niagara

Kevin Twomey doesn't do it for the recognition.

In fact, when he's asked to talk about his latest achievement, the public relations officer with Fonthill and District Kinsmen instead lists off other club members he feels are more deserving.

But it's that spirit that earned the Pelham resident the recent designation as a Life Member of the Kinsmen — the highest honour one can achieve in the Kin Canada organization.

Twomey, a 24-year member, was honoured last week during a dinner celebration after being selected by his peers to receive the award. He was joined by his wife, Betty, and children Jessica, Sarah and Patrick.

"It was so unexpected," he said Saturday, adding the shock of the evening is still sinking in.

"It's very humbling. I'm grateful."

With the life member designation comes an "element of responsibility," Twomey said.

The honour goes to those who are "exceptional leaders who are highly respected, motivators and have a generous, caring attitude," he said.

"I'm not sure I fit that mould, but it's a goal I'm trying to achieve," he said.

Twomey joined the Kinsmen in 1990 and has been involved in the group's many charitable initiatives over the years.

He takes pride in the club's motto: Serving the community's greatest needs.

"We just want to make the community a better place," said the 58-year-old husband and father of three. "We get our motivation from the smiles that we see."

Whether it's delivering poinsettias to residents in the Woodcott Wing of Welland hospital or bowling with members of the Special Olympics, it turns Twomey's heart to know the Kinsmen have had an impact on the lives of others.

"There's so much value in that. In knowing you're helping to make the world a better place," he said.

He credits the "remarka-

ble group of men" who come together to make the club's initiatives possible.

Throughout his time with the Kinsmen, Twomey has helped with many projects. One of his favourites included a long-running coffee house he was an integral part of starting in the early '90s.

The open mic nights promoted sharing of musical talents in an alcohol-free environment and encouraged people to open up with one another.

"Being a part of their lives was a rewarding experience," he said of the open mic participants, many of whom were working to overcome issues in their lives.

In addition to his job as a Kinsmen and his work with the Niagara Parks Commission, Twomey also volunteers as a district elder with Bethany Christian Reformed Church in Pelham. In that role, he oversees the pastoral and spiritual needs of about 20 families within the congregation.

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# LOCAL NEWS

■ **HEALTH:** Goal is quicker diagnosis so patients can stay in Ontario

## Province developing anti-Lyme disease plan

ROB HOULE  
QMI Agency Niagara

It's a case of better late than never.

"I would have been better a year ago. I don't know if anything will happen to better my situation, but of course it's something -- it's something to grab a hold of," Amanda Wilson said of a provincial strategy on Lyme disease.

The 40-year-old Fort Erie resident has been battling the disease since being bitten by an infected blacklegged tick last year.

Her affliction went undiagnosed until she paid for a blood test in the U.S. that showed positive for Lyme disease.

Prior to that, two blood tests approved by the provincial Health Ministry had come back negative.

Since the diagnosis, she has had to pay out of pocket for treatment in Buffalo. Unable to work at her job as a border security agent, savings were depleted. Money was borrowed from relatives. A fundraiser was held.

Treatment at an American clinic costs her \$1,500 a week. Supplements and other medication cost another \$2,000 a month.

Her self-employed husband, Jeff, 41, was also recently diagnosed with Lyme disease. His current treatment costs \$500 a week.

Wilson is buoyed by a directive from Queen's Park last week that set in motion the development of a comprehensive strategy to protect citizens against Lyme disease and to quickly diagnose and treat those infected.

The motion, introduced



Fort Erie husband and wife Jeff and Amanda Wilson are battling Lyme disease.

SARAH FERGUSON/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

by Algoma-Manitowlin MPP Michael Mantha, gained all-party support.

"The will of the House was to direct the government to establish a Lyme disease strategy," Mantha said.

That strategy, he said, will be developed within the next year in full consultation with Lyme disease stakeholders, such as the Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation, the Ontario Lyme Alliance, the G. Magnotta Foundation for Vector Borne Diseases, and their medical experts.

"We need to bring those expert opinions, views and testing to Ontario so that Lyme patients ... can be prop-

erly diagnosed immediately so that an aggressive antibiotic treatment can be done," Mantha said.

Mantha noted the neurological disease is referred to as a "great imitator," because its symptoms mimic those of the flu and other diseases such as fibromyalgia and Lou Gehrig's disease.

Caught early, Lyme is easily treated with a regime of antibiotics.

The problem in Canada is the test administered only looks for the presence of one strain of Borrelia, the bacteria that causes Lyme. If someone is infected with a different strain, testing comes back

negative, they go undiagnosed, don't get treated and the disease becomes chronic and can attack a person's heart, brain, joints, connective tissue, muscles, digestive system, eyesight and hearing.

Niagara's Wilson and Matt Risi, of Thorold, who could not get a diagnosis in Ontario for what was ailing them, were forced to pay for blood work in the U.S. at labs that test for multiple strains of Borrelia.

After testing positive for Lyme, they have had to seek treatment in the U.S. at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars.

"The technology that we have to identify the strains of

Lyme are outdated," Mantha said.

"So of course, when people go for their tests, they test negative. There are other jurisdictions that have the proper testing available, we just need to make that testing available to our health-care professionals here in Ontario."

Niagara Falls MPP Wayne Gates spoke in favour of the Lyme disease strategy during debate in the legislature.

Gates said he has heard from a number of constituents with Lyme disease, including Wilson, and doesn't believe they should have to leave the country for a diagnosis or treatment.

"We have a real problem here, and I believe we have to come up with a strategy, an overall plan to make sure Ontarians and Canadians are being taken care of," Gates said.

"I don't think you should have to go to the States to be told that you have Lyme disease, and here's the medication you need. We should be able to do that right here."

Rossana Magnotta, who heads the G. Magnotta Foundation named in memory of her husband, Gabe, who died as a result of Lyme disease in 2009, said an Ontario strategy is a step in the right direction.

"What's really important about this motion ... is that (Mantha) wants ... the patient groups and their experts to be part of this [strategy]," Magnotta said.

"I didn't want it to all go back in government hands again, because right now we have the status quo because it's only been government that's been involved."

Magnotta has been raising money to establish a Lyme disease research centre at Humber River Hospital, which is under construction in north-end Toronto and is slated to open in fall 2015.

Wilson expects to continue intravenous treatment until March and faces an indeterminate period after that before she recovers her health.

"Lyme disease is here and it's not going to go anywhere," Wilson said. "Citizens and people who reside in Canada need to be treated, treated fairly and justly."

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## COMMENT

# Turbine fight hasn't helped rural-urban divide

There are several factors that have contributed to Ontario's rural-urban divide, but perhaps the greatest has been the Ontario Green Energy Act of 2009, which continues to exclusively target rural properties for wind turbines and, to a lesser extent, solar farms. Since the legislation was rolled out five years ago, parts of rural Ontario have had its landscape altered and changed, probably for decades to come.

Yet what has contributed

most to the ongoing rural-urban divide is that the people who live with wind turbines have had precious little to say about their development. They are almost all rural residents; those who live within urban centres have yet to be seen to be a neighbour to the towers.

That wouldn't be an entirely bad thing, except that most rural residents didn't have a choice. Unless they are the host landowner, they have never invited wind turbine development into their community.

Indeed, to ensure that the legislation's objectives were met, planning and approval for these developments have been given to a centralized bureaucracy. Local municipalities have been allowed little influence, although some have become hosts to hundreds of such wind turbines.

Desperate to establish some formal objection, dozens of municipalities have declared themselves to be unwilling hosts, although such a label gives them little credit or clout within the

Green Energy Act's centralized authority. But that's all they have. The act is perhaps one of the most undemocratic pieces of legislation to have ever found approval in Queen's Park.

Of course, there has been formal political opposition to the legislation. Rural MPPs, mostly Progressive Conservatives, have been the loudest.

Most recently it has been MPP Lisa MacLeod, who called upon the Liberal government to restore to local municipalities the planning

authority they enjoy over most developments.

MacLeod notes that the Green Energy Act overrides 21 different pieces of legislation, including the Heritage Act and the Planning Act.

And, she correctly states, those individuals and corporations wanting to develop a wind farm should be compelled to follow the same process other developers must follow.

MacLeod is incorrect on one point. She calls the Green Energy Act a disaster.

It's not; it's been the single most successful program issued by the former government of Dalton McGuinty.

By circumventing the rules and regulations by which municipalities have followed for the better part of a century, the Green Energy Act has been able to accomplish most of its objectives. If municipalities had been allowed to exercise their local authority, far fewer wind turbines would have been allowed.

Peter Egg

## Shipwrecks — Delphin

SKIP OILLHAM  
For QMI Agency Niagara

The Liberty ship *Delphin* made two trips to the Great Lakes. It traded inland for one voyage in each of 1963 and 1964 with registry in Liberia.

This was one of many similar ships built in the United States during the Second World War. It was constructed at Portland, Maine, and launched as T.S. Gold on Jan. 23, 1945. It managed a few months of war service before peace was restored.

The vessel operated under private interests as *Chion Breeze* before becoming *Delphin* in 1954. It carried the name for a decade and came through the St. Lawrence Seaway at the end of its career.

The ship was sold again late in 1964 and was renamed *Ever Blessing*. It suffered severe damage in a grounding at Salsu To, near Inchon, South Korea, on April 19, 1967. It was refloated 10 days later but was not fit for further service.

The 134.6-metre-long freighter was towed to Shimazouwa, Japan, then Kure and finally Hirao. It arrived at the latter port on Aug. 31, 1967, and was broken up by Japanese ship-breakers and recycled.



Delphin pictured upbound in the Eisenhower Lock.

DAN MCCORMICK/COURTESY BROOKVILLE MUSEUM

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# LOCAL NEWS

## LOTTO: Three lottery winners in Niagara



**SUPPLIED PHOTO**  
Port Colborne's Daren Labbe, 26, claims his \$1-million winnings at the OLG prize centre in Toronto, Friday.

## Port Colborne man hits \$1M jackpot

QMI Agency Niagara

A 26-year-old Port Colborne man is \$1 million richer after checking a two-month-old lottery ticket.

Daren Labbe won the Guaranteed \$1 Million Prize from the Oct. 18 Lotto 6/49 draw.

"I won't be going to work tomorrow," Labbe told Ontario Lottery Corp. prize centre staff while picking up his winnings recently.

He said he scanned his winning ticket and "stood in disbelief."

Labbe scanned the ticket again, and "ran out to the car and sat there," he said. "I didn't tell my girlfriend until later."

Labbe, who has been playing the lottery every week for the past two years, said he plans to pay off his house, save for his son's future and take a vacation in Las Vegas.

The winning ticket was purchased at Bridgeport Variety on Main St. in Port Colborne.

Labbe isn't the only recent winner.

A couple from Ridgeway also won the Guaranteed \$1 Million Prize, from the Dec. 10 Lotto 6/49 draw. David and Valerie King purchased the winning ticket at Avondale on Ridgeway Rd. in Crystal Beach.

And Kristina McDaniel-Powell and Jason Harbour from Niagara Falls won the Poker Lotto All In jackpot worth \$85,635.10 on Sept. 26, as well as \$5,000 on the instant portion of their Poker Lotto play and \$5 on the nightly draw, bringing their total winnings to \$90,640.10. Their winning ticket was purchased at Yoo's Deli & Variety on Main St. in Niagara Falls.

Lotto 6/49 includes a Guaranteed \$1 Million Prize draw along with each and every regular draw. There have been 150 Guaranteed \$1 Million Prize draws to date. Seventy-four of the winning tickets have been sold in Ontario.

All In is a new option for Poker Lotto players, allowing to take a chance on instantly winning a jackpot that starts at \$10,000 and grows until it is won.

## IN BRIEF

### NPCA board members recognized

During its final meeting of the year, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority board honoured its members not returning in 2015.

Each was presented with a custom-crafted pen carved from the wood of Pelham's Comfort Maple, considered to be the oldest sugar maple tree in Canada. The wood was collected through routine maintenance

and pruning.

Those not returning are Debbie Zimmerman, former Grimsby regional councillor; Trevor Easton, former at-large citizen appointee for Grimsby; Dennis Dick, former Niagara-on-the-Lake councillor; David Eke, former Niagara-on-the-Lake mayor; Bob Steckley, former Fort Erie councillor; and former Welland mayor Barry Sharpe.

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## POLITICS

# Top cop filed complaint

RAY SPITERI

QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara Regional Police Chief Jeff McGuire has filed a complaint with Niagara's integrity commissioner against St. Catharines regional councillor and newly elected police services board member Andy Petrowski.

Petrowski confirmed the complaint made against him, but would not disclose the details behind it.

McGuire would not originally confirm the complaint, but later did when told by QMI Agency Niagara that Petrowski had done so.

"Yes I've filed a complaint with the integrity commissioner at the region," said McGuire.

He said he filed the complaint on Sept. 25.

McGuire would not disclose why he made the complaint.

"It's best left in the hands of the integrity commissioner until he conducts the work he needs to do," said McGuire.

Petrowski is one of three new regional representatives elected to the Niagara Regional Police Services board by regional council.

He joins Bob Gale of Niagara Falls and David Barrick of Port Colborne as council's representatives on the seven-member board for the next four years.

They will replace Gary Burroughs of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Henry D'Angela of Thorold, who served as board chair, and Vance Badawey, who lost to Barrick in a bid for Port Colborne regional councillor in the Oct. 27 municipal election.

"I don't plan to allow the police's complaint against me to prejudice my role (on the board)," said Petrowski.

He said in the "big picture," he wants to answer the question: "Are we getting the most out of taxpayers' money for police services? I don't believe we are."

Petrowski said he doesn't want to disclose details behind the complaint because he doesn't want to jeopardize any investigation.

"I believe the integrity commissioner will find the complaint of the police chief to be unfounded. I stand by everything that I say publicly to my fellow councillors about the state of the Niagara Region and specific individuals."

The Region's integrity commissioner George Rust D'Eye said he was "not in a position to answer that question" when asked whether McGuire filed a complaint against Petrowski.

"If there is a complaint and if I file a report, it will become a public document," said D'Eye.

Meanwhile, Petrowski said he is pleased Gale and Barrick were also elected to the board.

He said the three of them will bring a "unique and fresh" perspective to the board, providing "oversight to the way police services run."

"Our job is to make sure we deliver the best quality of policing at the lowest cost possible."

"I believe we're going to ask tough questions, be informed and turn over every rock."

Gale described McGuire and Petrowski as "two mature individuals."

"This is the first I've heard of this," he said. "I do not know the basis of the complaint and I'm not taking any side. We will move on."

As for his council colleagues on the board, Gale said: "We have three councillors coming in who are more cost conscious than you have ever seen."

Barrick could not be reached for comment.

McGuire said he had a "great relationship" working with the previous board, and he looks forward to working with the new board to "deliver good, efficient policing to the citizens of Niagara."

He said the board has many projects on the go and acknowledged there is "always a danger of losing continuity when several new members are elected to the board, but "change on the board is constant."

"We all have to work

together to make sure the services run efficiently."

Burroughs, who lost his bid to once again serve on the board, said Petrowski, Gale and Barrick should expect to be busy.

"It will be interesting for them. There's a lot involved. It is a negotiating year in 2015. They will be very busy," said the Niagara-on-the-Lake regional councillor and former regional chair.

"It's usually about 40 hours a month."

Burroughs said he would "never give advice" to incoming representatives.

"I'm sure they have their own mind made up what they want to do there."

"I loved it. It was terrific. I think we got a lot done. Having chief McGuire has been a great addition. It's in good shape to map to the new group there now."

The police services board is a civilian governance body for the Niagara Regional Police.

It's comprised of seven members — three regional councillors, three Niagara citizens appointed by the province and one citizen appointment by regional council.

The board is responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police services for Niagara's 12 municipalities, serving about 436,000 residents and an estimated 15 million visitors annually.

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## REGION

## Shakeup on the police board

ROB ROULE

QMI Agency Niagara

Things are about to get really interesting at the police board.

Niagara Region council voted in three new regional representatives to the seven-member Niagara Regional Police Services board. Elected were councillors Bob Gale of Niagara Falls, David Barrick of Port Colborne and Andy Petrowski of St. Catharines.

Gale topped the vote count with 17 and Barrick and Petrowski tied with 16 votes. They will replace Henry D'Angela of Thorold, who served as board chair, Gary Burroughs of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Vance Badawey, who lost to Barrick in a bid for Port Colborne regional councillor.

D'Angela garnered 13 votes, Burroughs 10 and Grimby Mayor Bob Bentley received five votes.

Sandy Annunziata of Fort Erie, Brian Heit of St. Catharines and Bart Maves of Niagara Falls withdrew their names.

"Obviously, my top priorities are to ensure the safety of the community, but we have to do it in a fiscally responsible manner," Petrowski said outside council in a bid for Port Colborne being elected to the board.

He said he will push to have officers wear body cameras, which he said would reduce litigation against the service while helping to protect officers.

"It's proven that violence against police goes down with the use of body cams," he said. "That will be a big issue."

Petrowski said he will keep close tabs on the construction of new police headquarters in Niagara Falls and a new detachment in St. Catharines to make sure they are completed on time and on budget.

He said "we have to turn over every stone. Seems that every police jurisdiction in Ontario has been able to find areas to save money, and we're just scratching the surface."

Gale, a businessman, former police officer and first-time politician, was visibly pleased by his election to the police board when interviewed outside chambers.

"I would like to look at every avenue there is to get the best (policing) at an affordable cost," he said.

Asked if he thought his and Petrowski's election would rattle police, Gale answered: "You're not nervous 'cause you've got something to hide."

Gale said he is going into

the police board with an open mind, "but we'll ask questions along the way."

Council filled all its committees, boards, commissions and agencies before the Christmas break.

Council voted to submit to the province the names of all councillors interested in sitting on the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

The province will choose from among Brian Day of Pelham, West Lincoln Mayor Doug Joyner, D'Angela, Bill Hodgson of Lincoln, Selma Volpatti of Niagara Falls and Bruce Timms of St. Catharines.

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim DiDiodi also carried the vote — 20 — over Brian Heit of St. Catharines for the sole region sponsor of Niagara Parks Commission.

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority will have a mix of new and seasoned board members.

Each of the 12 Niagara municipalities is represented on that board. Acclaimed were Joyner, Wanfleit Mayor April Jeffers, Welland Mayor Frank Campbell, George Marshall and Paul Grenier withdrew their names), Hodgson, Tony Quirk of Grimsby and Port Colborne Mayor John Maloney. Longtime board member Mickey DiFrancesco will represent Thorold as a private citizen.

In the run off, current board member Baidé Pelham Mayor Dave Augustin (14-8-3); Annunziata bested Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop (16-11); Niagara-on-the-Lake Lord Mayor Pat Darte bested Burroughs (15-13); and current NPCA chair Timms beat St. Catharines rival Heit (16-12).

There was a three-way tie for the region's five spots on the Niagara Regional Housing board. D'Angela, St. Catharines Mayor Walter Sendzik and Volpatti topped the vote with 18, Grenier (17) and Petrowski (14) rounded out the top five.

For the most part, councillors voted to allow all those wishing to serve on advisory committees to do so.

In decisions that were put to a ballot, newcomers to council were the top vote getters. Annunziata led the vote for economic development advisory panel (newbie Sendzik was second) and was tied for second with Debbie MacGregor of St. Catharines for the transportation strategy steering committee. Rookie Quirk topped that vote.



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## RECREATION PROGRAMS & CLASSES

### Zumba Classes @ Pelham Arena:

Tuesday, January 6 9:30 am-10:30 am  
Tuesday, January 6 7:00 pm-8:00 pm

Wednesday, Jan 7 7:30 pm-8:30 pm  
Thursday, Jan 8 10:00 am-11:00 am

### Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! - January 6 & 8

Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join ours! Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

### Arena Programs

Public Skating	Adult Public Skating	Adult/Preschool	Men's Shiny Hockey	Women's Shiny Hockey	Women's Learn to Play Hockey	Hockey Skills Hour	Pelham Panthers Home Games
Friday Jan 2 4:00 - 5:00 pm Tuesday Jan 6 7:30-8:30 pm Friday Jan 9 4:00-5:00 pm	Thursday Jan 8 1:00 - 2:00 pm	Friday Jan 2 10:00 - 11:00 am Tuesday Jan 6 7:00 - 8:00 am Friday Jan 9 10:00-11:00 am	Friday Jan 2 9:00 - 10:00 am Tuesday Jan 6 8:00 - 9:00 am Friday Jan 9 9:00-10:00 am	Thursday Jan 8 10:30-11:45 am	Thursday Jan 8 9:30 - 10:30 am	Thursday Jan 1 2:00 - 3:00 pm Monday Jan 5 11 am - 12 pm Thursday Jan 8 2:00-3:00 pm	Friday Jan 2 vs. Welland Friday Jan 9 vs. Fort Erie

Hockey Skills Hour - Come out to practice your hockey skills and learn from a Pelham Panthers Jr. B. Trainer. Ages 10 and up welcome. Shiny rates apply.  
Tim Horton's FREE Public Skates: Sunday, January 4 from 1:00pm - 2:20pm at the Pelham Arena, 1120 Haist Street, Fonthill.

**WE'RE OPEN DURING THE HOLIDAYS!** Please note Pelham Town Hall will only close December 31<sup>st</sup> at noon and remain closed January 1<sup>st</sup> for the observance of New Year's Eve and Day. Visit [www.pelham.ca](http://www.pelham.ca) for more information.

### Supervisor of Engineering

The Town of Pelham is now accepting resumes from applicants with an Engineering Technologist certificate with membership in the Ontario Association of Engineering Technicians & Technologist; 3 to 5 years of experience in a Public Works department; Municipal environment or related field; Level 2 Water Distribution System Operation; Level 2 Wastewater Collection System Operator; Certified Road Supervisor; good knowledge of Microsoft Office software, CADD, GIS systems; and supervisory experience. Knowledge of drinking water quality systems is considered an asset. This full-time opportunity is offered at \$65,040 - \$76,516 annually.

### Planner

The Town of Pelham is now accepting resumes from applicants with a University Degree in Urban Planning with a minimum of 3-5 years as a municipal planner or related experience. The incumbent must hold a membership with OPPI. This full-time opportunity is offered at \$56,911 - \$66,959 annually.

Visit [pelham.ca/career-opportunities](http://pelham.ca/career-opportunities) for more information and to apply for either position by Friday, January 9, 2015.

**CALL FOR MEMBERS** - The Town of Pelham is seeking interested individuals to join the Committee of Adjustment (five persons for a four-year term). Visit [pelham.ca](http://pelham.ca) for application details & to apply by **Tues, Jan 6, 2015**. For more info, contact the Town Clerk at [nbozzato@pelham.ca](mailto:nbozzato@pelham.ca) or (905) 892-2607 ext. 315.

### Fenwick Commemorative Bricks



The Village of Fenwick celebrated its 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June 2013. Now you have the opportunity to be a part of Fenwick's future. Purchase a granite brick to be incorporated into the downtown Fenwick Beautification Project. Standard, double, veteran's and corporate bricks are available. Visit [pelham.ca](http://pelham.ca) for details or come in to Town Hall (20 Pelham Town Square, Fonthill).

**Pelham NIAGARA**

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\$80.00 per person/10 week session (no class on Family Day, Feb. 16, 2015)  
For more info, contact Julie Cook at [jcook@pelham.ca](mailto:jcook@pelham.ca) or (905) 892-2607 ext. 326.  
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# LOCAL NEWS

■ **HEALTH:** NHS launches online community for people undergoing dialysis

## Kidney patients get connected

**MARYANNE FIRTH**  
QMI Agency Niagara

Four times a week, Kirsten Ernesaks walks into the St. Catharines hospital and settles in for three hours of treatment.

It's a routine she has developed over the past three years.

Though the facilities have changed in that time, many of the faces in the neighbouring beds of the dialysis unit are the same.

Despite spending ample time in the same room as others undergoing treatment in Niagara Health System's kidney care program, Ernesaks still felt a disconnect from her fellow patients.

Too much space between beds. Noisy but necessary medical equipment humming away.

That led to a feeling of isolation — and not just for the

36-year-old St. Catharines woman.

The NHS received feedback from its hemodialysis patients in the Garden City asking for some way to create a sense of connectivity.

As a result, a pilot project was launched in September and an online Google Plus community created just for them.

While undergoing treatment, patients can connect to the online forums through the health system's integrated bedside terminals and have private chats with one another or open public discussions.

"It makes dialysis a little less scary," Ernesaks said.

"You don't feel so alone."

She described the online community as a "different sort of social group that can come together to discuss something we have in common."

"Dialysis patients are



MARYANNE FIRTH/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Dialysis patients Kirsten Ernesaks and Marcia Prince chat briefly while Prince undergoes treatment at the St. Catharines hospital. The pair met online in a new Google Plus community created by the Niagara Health System.

unique in what we can eat, what we can do. And our social life, because of dialysis, can be limited."

Connecting with people facing similar circumstances offers a form of support and understanding no one else can provide, Ernesaks said.

Dialysis patients, she added, have their own language, often talking about

different members of the kidney care team.

Monthly live chats have been hosted to discuss a variety of topics and allow patients to have their questions answered by medical professionals, including a nephrologist, renal pharmacist, social worker and program manager.

Along with learning to interpret their blood work results, patients have received helpful tips about taking their medication and learned about the health benefits of dialysis.

"Through the chats, I've been able to find out more about my health," said Ernesaks, who acts as one of two patient moderators who monitor and promote the program.

"It's the concept of 'Nothing about us without us,'" said Cindy Bryson, the outpatient kidney care program manager in St. Catharines.

"We're keen on having the patients help us to identify improvements that can be made."

There are up to 180 dialysis patients on a weekly basis in St. Catharines. About 45 have joined the online community so far.

With the program off the ground, the challenge now becomes raising awareness, said Bryson.

It has been gaining momentum, she said, "but slowly." Staff have been working to promote the program among senior patients, teaching them to use the technology and access the useful online information.

The program is "still in the infant stages," but the hope is to see it expanded to include the 300 dialysis patients across the region, including those at the Welland and Niagara Falls hospitals, Bryson said.

It is currently being expanded to include 19 patients undergoing hemodialysis in their homes.

"We want to make sure our feet are firmly planted first," she said. "We want to make sure we're doing it right."

Bryson is unaware of any other renal program in Ontario or Canada that has undertaken a similar project. It was made possible in part by a \$49,500 grant from the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.

maryanne.firth@sumedia.ca  
Twitter: @mfrthfrtune



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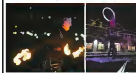


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## ■ BREAKENRIDGE-URE HOME

## 'Haunted house' for sale

PENNY COLES

QMI Agency Niagara

Is it haunted?

If ever there was a house that seemed hospitable to ghosts, 240 Centre St. in Niagara-on-the-Lake would be it, and it's been the subject of local ghost stories and paranormal websites for years.

An elegant, stately but simple two-story house of soft pink brick, it's been abandoned for almost 60 years, boarded up against curiosity seekers and vandals who have neverless found their way in.

It was broken into as recently as Halloween, the plywood door covering and locked replaced yet again.

Inside, most of what you see is old wood, including brick room partitions and wood floors, and other features, such as the original window frames and shutters, are piled up against the walls. There are four fireplaces on the main floor and another four upstairs, with man handles intact, plus two more in the basement, which was used as a kitchen.

There is no electricity, and shining a flashlight around reveals hunks of ceiling hanging down, missing floorboards and burned interior doors and framework.

A large hole in the roof has left the inside of the house open to the elements for decades, and yet there is no sign of four-legged presence.

When the real estate agent is asked about ghosts, his answer is that he's never seen an abandoned home before that didn't have some evidence of animals moving in, yet there are no tell-tale signs in this building that is so open to the elements.

If there are ghosts, they seem to be friendly, and welcoming — for all the dilapidated condition of the house, it has a positive energy to it, agree the three of us on this particular house tour.

It's been home to drunks, and a popular place for kids to break into for telling ghost stories and lighting fires.

Officially, it's called the Breakenridge-Ure house. It was the third house built in 1823 by John Breakenridge, a lawyer. There were tales of it being possessed by witches in its early history, and some mention of slaves, who lived in the barn and went back and forth from it to what became the Hawley house next door, being buried under a knoll on the half-acre property.

Local ghost tour guide Bill Hamilton says the tale he tells is of an owner who left in the middle of the night with his family, saying nothing to the neighbours. It was not listed for sale, but was to be bought by local Robert Ure. Years later, after telling real estate agents not to bother him, Ure, says Hamilton, was approached in a restaurant by an interested buyer who offered him \$1 million for the property. The owner told

him the house was not for sale and finished the conversation by saying "This house has a life of its own".

However, a woman who was born in the house in 1954 and lived there in the '60s — her parents sold to the Ures — said she has many "happy warm feelings" about her beautiful family home.

Her parents did a beautiful job of restoring it, she said.

"I do hope someone with the love of restoration buys it and is able to do with it as we all did."

Hamilton also tells the story of young boys who broke into the house based on local tales of it being haunted by witches. They go up to the front door, where they find a hole big enough to fit through, and as they're arguing over who is brave enough to enter, they are interrupted by a spark on the second floor that sets the roof on fire and sends them racing home. The next day they return to find the house is as it was before, despite the fire they clearly saw.

There was a fire upstairs in the house — that's a ghost story, says real estate broker Gary Chahinian — the damage was extensive and is still evident. He was told by the executor of the Ure estate that a vagabond who was living in the house more than 30 years ago was cooking when he heard someone arriving — he

thought the police were coming to arrest him. He ran off, and whatever he was cooking started the fire.

But the ghosts are not the real mystery — for years, people have driven to the house on the corner of Mississauga St. and wondered who owned it and why it's been empty for so long.

The house was purchased in 1956 by George and Cecilia Roberts, the seventh owners. They planned to renovate it.

Robert Ure, a local surveyor who was known for finding good deals on houses before they were officially put on the market, bought it from the Roberts with the same intention two years later, but nobody is certain why he never fixed it up.

Chahinian says a letter was found written by Robert to his wife Dorothy Ure in 1987, promising he would have it renovated so they could live in it.

Ure also bought three other Old Town properties, on King, Johnson and Ricardo sts. He and Dorothy lived in the house on King, built in 1816. Under the rundown white siding is the original log dwelling — the only one in NOTT, the realtor says — built by a military carpenter.

The Ures were known to frequent antique and garage sales, buying pieces they felt would be at suitable in heritage homes, but the houses they owned became



**Richard Brown**  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

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"Selling Throughout Niagara"

storage properties for their purchases, rather than homes.

Robert, a member of Grace United Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, died in March, and Dorothy, who worshipped at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, died in September. They are both buried in St. Andrew's cemetery — where they can keep an eye on the Centre St. house, across the street.

All four properties have been neglected, but together are listed for sale at more than \$3 million.

Chahinian says the terms of Dorothy's will ask that the house on Centre St. not be torn down. He is trying to find someone who respects and appreciates the history of the house to restore it.

## ■ THEATRE

## Shaw names new communications manager

JOHN LAW

QMI Agency Niagara

Laura Hughes is going from Shaw Media to the Shaw Festival.

The 10-year public relations specialist has been named the festival's new senior communications manager, effective Jan. 5. She replaces Shaw's longtime public relations director Odette Yabzeck, who recently started a new role as the company's annual fund director.

Hughes has media relations for HarperCollins Publishers, Toronto arts festival Luminato, and TV stations Bravo and TVO. She started at Shaw Media in January of this year.

Earlier this year, she com-

pleted a four-month term as professor in the English and liberal arts department of Seneca College.

Hughes has an honour BA in both drama and English from Queen's University.

"Laura has a passion for Canadian theatre," said Valerie Taylor, the Shaw Festival's director of marketing, communications and sales, adding Hughes will be "a valuable asset to the Shaw Festival and our team."

Yabzeck worked in Shaw's public relations department for 23 years. Shaw's executive director, Elaine Calder, will retire after next season, and 2016 will be the final season for artistic director Jackie Maxwell.

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## ■ CONFERENCE



DON FRASER/QUI AGENCY NIAGARA

Rick Osborne, Deb Nanson (centre) and Rick's wife Heather Osborne at "Red Umbrella's 2014" Wednesday gathering in St. Catharines to coincide with the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers.

## Standing together against sex trade violence

DON FRASER  
QUI Agency Niagara

Rick Osborne understands the pain and violence suffered by sex trade workers.

Osborne, raised in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, considers himself to have been "raped twice" during his troubled youth.

The first time, he said, it was a heroin-filled needle at age 14 that did it. Two years later, he was sexually assaulted.

Then when I was 21, I did 25 years in a penitentiary for robbery, weapons and gangsterism," he said.

Two years after his release in 2003, he founded Truth for Teens. It works to help young people recognize destructive lifestyles and recover from them.

Osborne said that in his earlier troubled life, his girlfriends were sex-trade workers.

"When I read out the names today, I will read out my first common-law wife and my niece, who were both murdered," said Osborne, 59, a Fortbills resident who spoke at Red Umbrella's 2014 conference held last Wednesday at Westview Christian Fellowship Church on Queenston St. St. Catharines.

He said the event is also important for the men in attendance, who learn to respect women and feel empathy for vulnerable sex-trade workers, who can sometimes seem invisible in society.

The gathering's co-organizers included Osborne and his wife, Heather, and recently with International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers.

It included a candle-lighting ceremony

to remember sex trade victims, a march, and speakers covering topics from sex trafficking to missing and murdered woman and the sex trade.

"We need to end this violence," said Deb Nanson, program director at Terry's Evergreen Addiction Recovery Services and a co-organizer.

"We have so many stolen sisters who are aboriginal. They are all sisters of the street, we need to stop this violence ... to make our communities aware that sex trafficking, sex work, addiction — none of it is (race-based).

"It doesn't say, 'I'm going to take you because you're impoverished.' It takes anybody."

Nanson said another theme of the gathering is opposition to the federal government's new prostitution bill. In essence, the law criminalizes the purchase rather than the sale of sex.

Women's groups and sex workers' organizations have said the law limits sex workers' ability to screen for dangerous clients, among other concerns.

"Bill C-36 does not protect our women," Nanson said in an interview. "It leaves our women more vulnerable, more open to rape ... overdoes and recruitment by pimps."

"The women become more victimized in a situation where they're already victims."

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne recently asked Ontario's attorney general to investigate Bill C-36, concerned the law won't make sex workers safer.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## ■ FACEBOOK

### Falls Checks In at No. 1

**TONY RICCIUTO**  
QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara Falls is No. 1. A few Toronto locations are on the list as are the Calgary Zoo and the Capilano Suspension Bridge in Vancouver.

The list, which was released by Facebook, shows Niagara Falls as the top Checked In location in Canada in 2014.

The Rogers Centre came in second and Ripley's Aquarium of Canada placed third on the list of 12 top places.

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati, who is active on social

media, said he is pleased, but not surprised the city received top billing.

"Whenever I talk to people from Toronto, the United States or from anywhere, they think of Niagara Falls as something of a playground and a place to have fun for all ages," said Diodati. "Something like that on Facebook doesn't surprise me at all. We are far enough for people to get out of Dodge, but it's close enough and affordable."

For people who are not familiar with the Checked In feature on Facebook, this is how it's

described by its help centre.

"When someone is on a smartphone, they can enable location services and share where they are by checking into a location. To check in to a location, from your News Feed, tap Check In. Select the location where you are from the list of nearby places. If you don't see your location, type the name of the place you're at into the search bar. Write an optional description of what you're doing. You can also tag your friends at

### FACEBOOK'S TOP 'CHECKED IN' CANADIAN LOCATIONS IN 2014

1. Niagara Falls
2. Rogers Centre
3. Ripley's Aquarium of Canada
4. Canada's Wonderland
5. The Toronto Zoo
6. Whistler Blackcomb
7. CN Tower / La Tour
8. The Calgary Zoo
9. Metro Toronto Convention Centre
10. Banff Lake Louise
11. Centre Bell
12. Capilano Suspension Bridge Park

your location. Tap Post to share."

Diodati said he is on Facebook every day, but he has never used that feature.

"I'm constantly chronicling my visits, my ribbon cuttings and my visitations, but I don't

get as involved because there are so many applications and things that you can do. They are neat, but quite honestly I just don't have the time to participate in them," said Diodati.

Lori Lococo, who used social

media when she ran for Niagara Falls city council during the October municipal election, said she has only used the Check In feature a few times. She said she believes it is used mainly by younger people as a way to stay in touch with friends.

"I don't use it on a regular basis, but sometimes I'll be at an event and it comes up I might do it, but not very often," said Lococo, who has more than 3,000 friends on Facebook.

During her campaign, she used a feature called "Where's Lori Now" that would show her attending meetings or special events in the community. If that group or organization had its own Facebook page, she would share it with it.

## ■ CHARITY

### Parkinson's clinic gets boost from ex-NHLers

**GRANT LARLEE**  
QMI Agency Niagara

More than \$130,000 flowed to the Hotel Dieu Shaver's rehab centre for Parkinson's disease from two charity events spearheaded by local hockey legends.

During a recent news conference at the Hotel Dieu Shaver, the United Way of St. Catharines and District, along with St. Catharines MP Rick Dykstra, gave the Steve Ludzik Centre \$50,000 of the more than \$180,000 raised during the annual Hockey Night in St. Catharines game.

Dykstra said the rest of the money raised through the game was directed to the United Way. Ludzik and Rick Vaive — both former National Hockey League players — presented the centre with \$85,311 raised during Ludzik's Golf Tournament and Roast events that are held in conjunction with the hockey game. Ludzik himself has Parkinson's disease.

"Our goal, our long-term goal really, is to raise enough money so the clinic can run for a few years and expand," he went on to say. "We have to build to that slowly, but that is what we are aiming at."

The Steve Ludzik Centre provides a six-week program aimed at improving the physical abilities of Parkinson's patients.

According to a Shaver press release, the centre "assists clients to identify goals related to improving depression and/or anxiety, strengthening their voice, improving bowel and bladder control and increase their knowledge of Parkinson's disease."

Although the centre is housed at the Shaver's facilities on Glenridge Ave., it is funded through private donations.

Hotel Dieu Shaver CEO Jane Rufrano said it costs about \$85,000 annually to run the clinic, which treated 47 people last year.

Rufrano said while she supports the goal of expanding the clinic to treat more patients, the more immediate goal should be to improve its waiting list, which is currently at about three years.

"If you are a person struggling with Parkinson's disease, waiting three years isn't really acceptable," she said.

"So while we want to expand the clinic, maybe we don't do that right now but find a way to reduce the length of that waiting list."

For more information or to donate to the clinic, go online to [www.hotel DieuShaverFoundation.com](http://www.hotel DieuShaverFoundation.com).

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### ■ STORE CLOSING: Pop culture mecca shutting its doors

## Pulp Comics packs it in

JOHN LAW  
QMI Agency Niagara

Downtown Niagara Falls' cornerstone for pop culture will be closing early in the new year.

Patrons of Pulp Comics received the bad news from owner Paul Tappay that his five-and-a-half year old shop on the corner of Queen St. and Chrysler Ave. will soon be shutting its doors.

"There's only so much hobby money to go around," says Tappay, citing the increased competition from Big B Comics on Lundy's Lane and box stores like Walmart now selling graphic novels. "When you start saturating the market with options, that piece of the pie you're used to getting inevitably will change."

Niagara Falls was unique in that it had three comic book shops (The Neutral Zone, Big B, Pulp Comics). Tappay's business started small in a space next to the Hair Lover's Place salon on Queen St., then three years ago moved two blocks up the street to the former Poptones and Ed Spers Gallery building.

The new space's 270 square metres, spread across two floors, allowed Pulp Comics to expand into gaming and other collectibles. A mural of comic book characters was painted on the side, making it one of downtown's most unique buildings.

The store's success led Tappay to co-found the Niagara Falls Comic Con, which is now one of the city's biggest annual events.

"I take some solace in the fact Pulp Comics led to a bigger influx in pop culture in the city," he says. "If it wasn't for Pulp Comics, the Niagara Falls Comic Con wouldn't have happened."

But Tappay has noticed four to five months of "steady decline" in business, and made the difficult decision to stop purchasing inventory. He's hoping for a single buyer to absorb his stock, but if not will have a series of sales until at least the end of January.

Moving to another location would require more capital for a new space, and

he would open in the dead zone of January or February.

"As any retail person will tell you, they're the worst two months of the year."

Closing Pulp will be especially emotional for Tappay since it's the business his father Garry funded as thanks for donating half his liver to him, which helped save his life in 2009.

"That was the hardest conversation, talking to my dad about it," he says.

Leaving Queen St. behind will also be hard, as Tappay has long been one of the street's biggest supporters. He plans to rent a small space on the street so that he can remain on its board of directors.

"Inevitably, it feels bad that I'm leaving right after Cupoli's closed," he says. "People love to pile on Queen St. Nothing more fun than kicking somebody when they're down."

Tappay's life has completely changed since he opened the business. He got married in September, and supporting a new family factored into his decision to close the store. He plans on seeking a sales position and contribute to the community, possibly with the humane society (he recently lost both his dogs).

"I'm the Comic Book Guy... it's tied into who I am. I'm hoping I can use the contacts, the networks, the friendships I've made to continue to give back to the community. I love Niagara Falls and want to be a part of it."

Downtown BIA chairman Phil Ritchie said Tappay is a "servy entrepreneur working in a tough sector."

"The big picture demand for comics overall is declining, comic book venues have increased in Niagara, and the ever insatiable big box stores now compete in this space."

He's confident a new tenant for the space will be secured.

"It's important that we celebrate our many openings and expansions as much as we mourn when a business closes."

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### ■ APPEARANCE

## Linda Blair to make heads spin at Comic Con

JOHN LAW  
QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara Falls Comic Con will be possessed by Linda Blair next June.

The star of the iconic horror movie *The Exorcist* will attend all three days of the con, June 5 to 7 at the Scotiabank Convention Centre.

Blair, in just her third movie, earned an Oscar nomination for the 1973 classic, starting as young girl possessed by a demon. The film stunned audiences with its special effects and graphic content, and went on to become one of the biggest films of the '70s. When adjusted for inflation, it would still be the ninth biggest moneymaker in movie history.

Blair reprised the role of Regan in

the 1977 sequel *Exorcist II: The Heretic*, a massive bomb considered one of the worst movies ever made. She spent the rest of the '70s and much of the '80s in B movies such as *Roller Boogie*, *Hell Night* and *Chained Heat*.

In recent years, Blair has devoted much of her time to animal rights and her non-profit organization *The Linda Blair Workhead Foundation*.

Blair joins a Comic Con lineup which already includes Billy Dee Williams, Richard Hatch of *Battlestar Galactica*, Elvira, Yvonne Craig of the *Batman* TV series, horror effects legend Tom Savini, Scott Wilson of *The Walking Dead*, and WWE icon the Iron Sheik.

Tickets start at \$25, available at [www.nfcomiccon.com](http://www.nfcomiccon.com).



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